

# Viewpoint Censorship on the Internet

*This timeline illustrates examples of suppression of Christian and conservative views on the internet by private corporations that are not constrained by the First Amendment. The timeline is not exhaustive, but merely representative. For an updated timeline, visit [nrb.org/digitalfreespeech](http://nrb.org/digitalfreespeech).*

- June 2020** ● **Instagram** censors Bethel Music worship leader Sean Feucht's worship videos, labeling them as "harmful or false information."
- May 2020** ● **YouTube** bans John Piper's "Coronavirus and Christ" audiobook for "violating community guidelines."
- April 2020** ● **Google** suspends Idaho church's app from the Google Play store after accusing the pastors of a lack of sensitivity and/or capitalizing on the coronavirus pandemic.
- January 2020** ● **TikTok** bans and permanently removes Live Action from the platform.
- December 2019** ● **Facebook** bans evangelist Franklin Graham from posting on the site for 24 hours over a 2016 post he made on the site, and takes down the post. Facebook later restores the 2016 post and apologizes.
- November 2019** ● **Google** completely removes the PragerU mobile app from its Play store supposedly for violating a technical privacy/policy guideline and for not meeting "disclosure guidelines," though the app had been running all year and previously met all guidelines.
- October 2019** ● **Twitter** censors Students for Life of America's President, labeling a pro-adoption tweet as "sensitive content."
- September 2019** ● The head of the Angel Families organization has her posts raising awareness about illegal immigrant crime removed from **Facebook** as "hate speech." Facebook also temporarily blocks her from posting to her nonprofit's page and permanently removes the donation button from the page.  
  
**Twitter** temporarily bars the pro-life Center for Medical Progress from live-tweeting the preliminary hearing for charges against two pro-life investigators based on a misrepresentation of the tweets from Planned Parenthood's attorneys.

- August 2019 ● **Twitter** temporarily locks Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's campaign account after it shared a video in which some protesters spoke of violence outside his Kentucky home, where he was recovering from a shoulder fracture.
- Instagram** blocks pro-life ad about mom who chose life despite brain tumor.
- July 2019 ● **Apple** approves LifeSiteNews' application to publish its news on their Apple News platform but abruptly reversed course a week later, telling LifeSite that they had deleted the channel and all of the content from their platform because it "didn't comply with our Apple News guidelines." Specifically, they stated that LifeSite's "[c]hannel content shows intolerance towards a specific group."
- June 2019 ● **Pinterest** permanently bans pro-life non-profit Live Action for spreading "medical misinformation and conspiracies that turn individuals and facilities into targets for harassment and violence."
- Vimeo** removes account of undercover journalism organization Project Veritas, saying, "You cannot upload videos that are hateful, defamatory, or discriminatory," although nothing said was hateful, defamatory, or discriminatory.
- May 2019 ● **Facebook** suspends Blexit founder Candace Owens for seven days for posting that "white supremacy is not a threat to black America, as much as father absence and liberal policies that incentivize it, are."
- Facebook** censors conservative author and media entrepreneur Michelle Malkin for posting supportive messages about recently-banned conservative figures Laura Loomer and Gavin McInnes.
- April 2019 ● **Instagram** pulls as "hate speech" a comic by Babylon Bee Founder Adam Ford that compared the moral outrage of abortion to the moral outrage of slavery.
- March 2019 ● Dr. Michael Brown's **YouTube** channel demonetized after Google executive responds to employees upset over Brown video explaining the Christian teaching on same-sex marriage.
- February 2019 ● Human rights activist Faith McDonnell banned from **Facebook** after posting famous photo of Coptic martyrs. Although initially called a "permanent" ban, Facebook later restored her account after media attention.
- December 2018 ● Franklin Graham gets 24-hour Facebook ban for 2016 post asserting biblical values on gender in response to singer Bruce Springsteen's cancellation of North Carolina concert. **Facebook** later said the ban was a mistake and apologized to Graham.
- November 2018 ● **Instagram** deletes an image by Founders Ministries, "Only Men Can Be Pastors," claiming the post was "hate speech."
- October 2018 ● U.S. Senate candidate from Tennessee Marsha Blackburn's ad, "Stop The Mob," rejected by **Google Ads** as "shocking content."
- Facebook** rejects pro-life ads by Susan B. Anthony List about babies born prematurely.

- August 2018** ● PragerU announces that it is being “heavily censored” on **Facebook** after videos were blocked as “hate speech.” Facebook later apologized and restored the content.
- Because it “related to politics or an issue of national importance,” **Facebook** denies an ad that Steven Solomon, a pastor and Army veteran, wished to use to promote his radio program that said, “Speak the truth, Love God, Defend America.”
- Facebook** suspends popular blogger Elizabeth Johnston (“The Activist Mommy”) for unspecified “hate speech.” Facebook later apologized and restored content it had removed.
- July 2018** ● Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) confirms that he filed an FEC complaint against **Twitter** due to an apparent shadow ban of his account. Reps. Jim Jordan (R-Ohio), Mark Meadows (N.C.), and Devin Nunes (R-Calif.) were reportedly also so treated by Twitter.
- June 2018** ● **Facebook** blocks Dr. Robert Gagnon, previously on the faculty of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, for criticizing a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation video that promoted homosexuality and nudity to young children.
- May 2018** ● **Amazon** denies Alliance Defending Freedom access to its charitable AmazonSmile program based on a categorization of the controversial Southern Poverty Law Center.
- April 2018** ● **Facebook** rejects an ad from Franciscan University of Steubenville featuring the historic San Damiano Cross because it was deemed “shocking, sensational, or excessively violent.”
- January 2018** ● Google’s **YouTube** flags and deletes the live stream of NRBTv for an unspecified Community Guidelines violation. YouTube also inflicts a three-month strike on NRBTv’s account.
- November 2017** ● **Twitter** informs radio talk show host Erick Erickson that his tweet related to the debate about transgenderism “has been flagged for possible violations” of its “hateful conduct policy and/or German laws.”
- October 2017** ● **Twitter** blocks a political ad Rep. Marsha Blackburn (R-Tenn.) attempted to promote because it deemed her reference to Planned Parenthood’s documented “sale of baby body parts” to be “inflammatory.”
- August 2017** ● Google’s **YouTube** demonetizes hundreds of videos produced by Dr. Michael Brown, host of Line of Fire radio show, and targets “controversial religious” content.
- July 2017** ● **Twitter** blocks tweets and retweets of AT&T’s public policy blog expressing an opinion contrary to its own during a “Day of Action” supporting “common carrier” Title II federal regulation over internet service providers.
- Facebook** temporarily blocks more than 20 pages of Catholic organizations and individuals followed by millions worldwide.
- May 2017** ● **Twitter** makes Live Action, a pro-life organization, ineligible to advertise on its platform until removal of “offensive” content.

- March 2017 ● Citing disagreement with views expressed in four videos by Pure Passion TV on sexuality, **Vimeo** removes all 850 videos of the ministry and closes its account.
- January 2017 ● **Amazon** denies D. James Kennedy Ministries access to its charitable AmazonSmile program based on a categorization of the controversial Southern Poverty Law Center.
- October 2016 ● Prager University announces that Google's **YouTube** is censoring many of its educational videos by placing them in "restricted mode," which flags and prevents them from being accessed freely.
- July 2016 ● Google's **YouTube** temporarily blocks a Center for Security Policy video critical of the Muslim Brotherhood, jihad, and Sharia law.
- May 2016 ● Gizmodo, a technology blog, reports evidence of **Facebook** workers censoring conservative content off of and injecting preferred articles into its influential trending news feed.
- November 2015 ● **Facebook** blocks postings by Vanderbilt University professor, Dr. Carol Swain, for over 26 hours after liberal student activists organized complaints about her religious and moral viewpoints.
- Google's **YouTube** terminates account of Olive Tree Ministries after the ministry posted an interview about persecution of Christians in the Middle East. YouTube reinstated the account 3 days later after media inquiries.
- August 2015 ● **Facebook** temporarily blocks user postings about a report on illegal immigration by the Center for Immigration Studies.
- April 2015 ● Responding to pressure from complaints, **GoFundMe** deletes fundraising campaigns for Sweet Cakes by Melissa and Arlene's Flowers — companies that had declined to provide services for same-sex weddings — and then changed its terms of service to support its decision.
- October 2014 ● **Twitter** blocks users from linking to a petition supporting the Houston pastors whose sermons were subpoenaed by the city because the pastors supported a referendum against a gender-neutral restrooms ordinance.
- April 2014 ● Citing a violation of its Community Standards, **Facebook** removes satirical post about immigration and Nevada rancher standoff by FOX's Todd Starnes.
- March 2014 ● **Facebook** temporarily bans evangelist Ray Comfort after he posts a photo of Westboro Baptist Church signs in an article in which Comfort encourages Christians to distance themselves from Westboro.
- December 2013 ● **Twitter** blocks users from posting a link to a petition drive supporting Phil Robertson who had been suspended from the *Duck Dynasty* show by A&E after voicing his biblically-based views on homosexuality.

- August 2013 ● Citing a violation of Community Standards regarding religion, **Facebook** temporarily blocks administrators of the Military with PTSD page.
- July 2013 ● Citing a violation of its Community Standards because of a post which favorably mentioned the NRA, Chick-fil-A, Paula Deen, Cracker Barrel, the Gaithers, and the Gideon Bible, **Facebook** removes the post and temporarily blocks access to the account of Todd Starnes, host of *FOX News & Commentary*.
- June 2013 ● Citing its policy against “excessively objectionable or crude content,” **Apple** removes from its App Store a Setting Captives Free app that promotes freedom from homosexuality.
- March 2013 ● **Facebook** reportedly bans a Texas man for posting the phrase “seize the day with baby Obama,” while leaving up posts calling for the killing of Sarah Palin.
- January 2013 ● Citing “security concerns,” **Facebook** temporarily closes the page of an Israeli journalist after he posted criticism of the Palestinian Authority, restores the page 24 hours later, but deletes the article in question.
- Citing a violation of its Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, **Facebook** removes a post by Chicks on the Right that was critical of the White House press secretary.
- October 2012 ● **Facebook** removes a post critical of President Obama’s handling of the Benghazi attack and puts a 24-hour block on the account of Special Operations Speaks PAC.
- July 2012 ● **Facebook** temporarily removes Gov. Mike Huckabee’s post in support of Chick-fil-A.
- May 2012 ● Google’s **YouTube** pulls video of a youth minister who warned of the same-sex marriage movement in America.
- November 2010 ● **Apple** removes Chuck Colson’s Manhattan Declaration from its iTunes App Store

## About NRB’s Project for Digital Free Speech

NRB’s Project for Digital Free Speech is a venture of NRB and is a pioneering project that monitors and responds to the threats of anti-Christian censorship and other free speech violations on the internet, and especially on communication platforms established by “new media” tech companies in the private sector like Google, Facebook, and Apple. The Project also evaluates the decisions made in the public, governmental sector as well when they infringe the First Amendment rights of citizens on the web.

